

Counterfeiting Faith: Middleton's Theatrical Reformation of *Measure for Measure*

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Thomas Middleton's *A Mad World, My Masters* describes religion as a theatrical performance, constructed with face-paint, costumes, and wigs:

Hot zeal into hot lust is now transformed,
Grace into painting, charity into clothes,
Faith into false hair, and put off as often. (4.5.59–61)¹

On stage, any representation of religion is a performance: made-up, repeated, and then “put off,” removed, stored away physically and psychologically until needed again. Douglas Bruster contends that Middleton's imagination is morally “black and white,” but in his plays, as Molly Murray has noticed, “there is always the possibility of changing one's color.”² A talented atheist-actor may actually perform sainthood better than a believing amateur. Certainly, a serial sinner can compellingly play a saint. Alcoholic, philandering Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor, each married to someone else, were in the middle of a full-time affair while Burton portrayed a moving martyr and was nominated for an Oscar for Best Actor, in *Becket* (1964).³ In the multiple-award-winning film *The Song of Bernadette* (1943), Jennifer Jones, whose performance as the virginal saint won her the Oscar for Best Actress, was actually married with two children—and committing adultery at the time. Twentieth Century-Fox had invested heavily in this, their “most prestigious film” of 1943, and the producers, knowing that the real story would

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leak out, leaped into spin control and released an image of Jones and her husband as “Mr. and Mrs. Cinderella.” Press images show a young couple happily in love. But Jones announced, the day after she won her Oscar, that she had filed for divorce.⁴

Ambrose Bierce defined “saint” as a “sinner, revised and edited.”⁵ Actors can certainly revise and edit their own unholy personalities in order to transform themselves convincingly (if temporarily) into saintly characters. Plays, too, get revised and edited in the theater. Middleton began his own theatrical career writing a new Prologue and Epilogue for Robert Greene’s *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, and many years later he also apparently supplied “new additions” for Shakespeare’s *Measure for Measure*. Those additions, as I hope to show, interestingly revise and edit that play’s original representation of religion. But playbooks are not the only texts that get transformed.⁶ Holy books, too, get revised and edited: English Protestant Bibles differed significantly from the Latin Catholic Vulgate (and from each other). One man’s martyr becomes another man’s heretical traitor.

Is there any relationship between these religious and theatrical transformations? The passage from *Mad World* describes the moment of conversion so fundamental to Christianity, and particularly important to a new sect like Protestantism, which Counter-Reformation polemicists regularly described as a “new religion.” Such moments, like the quintessential conversion of Saul/Paul at Damascus, are particularly dramatic, and they have been artfully re-presented, re-performed, in every medium: prose chronicle, poem, painting, sculpture, novel, film, autobiography, and the ubiquitous performance art of everyday life.⁷ But in the theater, a conversion narrative requires an actor to play both the before and the after, the sinner and the newly-transformed, penitent believer. The actor cannot genuinely *be* both; he has to be faking one identity or the other. Or, if he genuinely *becomes* each, in successive moments of

performance, then he cannot *remain* converted, because during the very next performance he will have to return to his former unredeemed state at the pre-conversion beginning of the play.

Middleton's climactic phrase here, "put off *as often*," calls attention to a fundamental difference between the amateur religious drama of medieval Christianity (which also used painting, clothes, and false hair) and the professional theater inaugurated in the middle of the sixteenth century, when the first *commedia dell'arte* troupe was registered in Padua in 1545. The Catholic mystery cycles were performed on annual ritual occasions in specific communities; the professional shows, by contrast, were mobile and frequent. The commercialization of theater, the creation of a European entertainment industry, required constant repetition, which in turn required actors to repeat these turns, these pirouettes of being, putting on and putting off identities, including religious identities, day after day, week after week, year-round. The widespread professionalization and commercialization of this particular brand of enacted transubstantiation led in turn to what Arpad Szakolczai calls "the theatricalization of social life" in the period 1550–1650; what Martin Green and John Swan call "a readiness for reversal . . . a sense of the artifice of all emotion;" what Gary Taylor calls "the routine commodification of affect."⁸ And this pervasive theatricalization was happening at the same time that the contests between the old and new incarnations of Christianity led to similarly abrupt *voltas* in European religious experience: the turn, in England in particular, from Catholic to Protestant, to again Catholic, to again Protestant, a national morphing mirrored in the private instability of unnumbered individuals, moving back and forth across shifting confessional boundaries, changing spiritual costumes, putting on and putting off Christian masks "as often" as actors.

Like other professional playwrights, Middleton must often have witnessed such backstage reversals, as his satirical sentence about transformation subtly suggests. While a typical

moment of religious penitence might be described as a shift from “hot lust” to “hot zeal,” Middleton instead writes, “Hot zeal into hot lust is now transformed.” The sentence reverses the direction of conversion, like a film being played backward, like an actor going back to re-play a conversion. Moreover, the repetition of *hot* suggests that zeal and lust may have more in common than preachers usually acknowledge—or that preachers and actors are members of the same species, regularly performing to and competing for the same London audiences.⁹ Within the turmoil of post-Reformation Europe, rival sects, like rival troupes of actors, competed for audiences by performing, enacting, the vicarious experience of faith, revelation, conversion. The vicious polemics and mirrored martyrdoms on both sides of the divide were watched by the same people who also watched bearbaitings and plays in purpose-built theaters. In such an environment, religion becomes a spectator sport. “Modern thinking as codified by Descartes, Newton, Adam Smith and Kant,” Szakolczai argues, originates in the frame of mind created by innumerable experiences of professional theatre in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, which (like these later thinkers) “identifies the detached spectator as the highest possible ethical and intellectual standpoint human beings can achieve.”¹⁰ Audiences became arbiters of the validity of a theology.

In *Mad World*, Middleton’s words “now transformed” are spoken by a character named “Penitent Brothel,” who actually experiences a moment of religious transformation, on stage, in real time, when he is tempted by a demonic succubus who looks like, and claims to be, his married lover, Mistress Harebrain. In both the 1998 Globe production, directed by Sue Lefton, and the 2013 Royal Shakespeare Company production, directed by Sean Foley, the succubus was played by the same actor who played Mistress Harebrain. That was also probably true of the original performances; certainly, the script permits and encourages such doubling. Is there any

discernible difference, that doubling seems to ask, between the human and the supernatural? But Penitent Brothel himself is, perhaps, even more ambiguous, as his name suggests. Do we emphasize “Penitent” or “Brothel”? He begins the play in a way that makes “Brothel” more appropriate, and ends it apparently “Penitent”; but in the name itself, “Brothel” gets the last word. Is his conversion real and iconic, as Jack Heller argues?¹¹ Or is this another example of the “parody and black camp” that Jonathan Dollimore finds in all of Middleton’s “radically skeptical” plays?¹² Peter Saccio recognizes that Penitent Brothel “is the only character in *Mad World* with a vivid sense of sin,” but he also acknowledges that “the spiritual anguish of the repentance scenes is studded with farcical effects.” No wonder, then, that “the tonal dissonance between his fear of damnation and the play’s amoral intrigue has puzzled modern critics.”¹³

The RSC production set the succubus scene (4.1) in the small, depressing, 1950s bedsit of Penitent Brothel (played by John Hopkins), seen cooking himself a bachelor dinner on a two-burner hob. His skillet caught fire. While he was frantically and ineptly putting out the fire, the Succubus/Mistress (played by Ellie Beaven) appeared behind him, sitting nonchalantly on his chair, startling him as much as she did us in the audience. This was a striking bit of unexpected trickery, a piece of theatrical magic, which like other kinds of magic depends on an illusion carefully engineered to short-circuit the cognitive apparatus of human rationality.¹⁴ Theater is fundamentally, as Aristotle recognized, illusory, an imitation of something it is not, a self-conscious act of mimesis. Religion, by contrast, advertises access to eternal truths. Is an illusion the only way to convey, to the dwellers in Plato’s cave, a reality otherwise invisible to the impoverished human perceptual apparatus? Or does the illusion instead reveal the fundamental con-artistry of religious institutions and practices? Christopher Marlowe was accused of affirming, “that Moses was but a juggler” (that is, someone who performed tricks on stage).

Since Moses was a Jew, that might be dismissed as mere anti-Semitism, but Marlowe also allegedly asserted “That if there be any God or any good religion, then it is in the Papists, because the service of God is performed with more ceremonies, as elevation of the mass, organs, singing men, shaven crowns, etc.,” and “That all Protestants are hypocritical asses.” Whether or not Marlowe ever said any of these things, the words attributed to him are specifically theatrical: religion is a matter of “jugglers” (tricks), “ceremonies” (spectacle and music), and hypocrites (etymologically, *ὑποκριτής*, referring to “an actor on the stage”). That the accusations were considered plausible is a confirmation of the tension between religious belief and the theatrical production (and exposure) of belief in fictions.¹⁵

These critical disputes about Penitent Brothel and Christopher Marlowe illustrate the difficulties created by the performance of religion onstage. At any given moment, is the enactment of religious belief sincere, honest, authentic? Or is it an artful illusion, motivated by a material or Machiavellian agenda? The profit-seeking of entrepreneurial authors and actors, or the self-interest of characters in a play? When a character in Middleton’s *The Puritan* says, “Religion is come about to fantasy” (1.2.56), is that an accurate lament about the runaway, uninhibited, irrational religious imagination in a particular community? Or does it suggest a more general equation between fantasy and religious belief? When Vindice describes Lussurioso’s defense of adultery and fornication as “A very fine religion” (*Revenger’s Tragedy* 1.3.109), is he simply being sarcastic? Vindice is in disguise as Piato: are the words meant to sound like the genuine opinion of “Piato,” but not Vindice? How can we distinguish between the beliefs of the “real” character, the beliefs of the “disguise” character, and the beliefs of the author? And whoever’s belief is being represented on stage, can performers prevent spectators from taking it

wrong? Don't the words plant an idea, which—in the minds of at least some listeners—can proliferate uncontrollably and irreverently?

For a performer, director, or spectator, Vindice's utterance of the atemporal abstract noun "religion" is a single moment of interpretation, which must be realized concretely and specifically in a facial expression, a tone of voice, a gesture, a prop, a costume. Historical generalizations about a homogenized "Protestant England" have now been replaced by much more nuanced scholarly interpretations of the work of individual authors. But even biographical approaches tend to assume some unity or coherence in a writer's entire body of work. However, from a theatrical perspective there has to be something distinctive about each particular play: they aren't all telling the same story, or they'd all be monotonous. For theater-makers, any idea about the religious beliefs of a period or a playwright is a generalization, and one of the fundamental rules of acting is "never generalize." Even when we focus on a single play, instead of decades of belief incarnated in a "Complete Works," we are still dealing with too broad a canvas, particularly in an age when collaboration between playwrights became increasingly common.

Depending on how the evidence is interpreted, from one third to one half of all early modern commercial plays were written in collaboration, or were written by one author and then later adapted by a different one. So a single play-text may contain within it more than one religious point of view, written down at more than one point in time. Although *Measure for Measure* was undoubtedly written by Shakespeare and performed at court in 1604, evidence first collected by John Dover Wilson and Alice Walker indicates that the original play was revised or adapted at some point between 1606 and the play's publication in 1623 in the Folio *Comedies, Histories, and Tragedies*.¹⁶ From 1993 to 2007, John Jowett and Gary Taylor published

compelling bibliographical, historical, and stylometric evidence that the adaptation was made by Thomas Middleton in 1621.¹⁷ My own recent work on the play in performance supports the adaptation hypothesis.¹⁸

Measure for Measure apparently contains the work of two playwrights. Does this make any difference to how we interpret the play, theatrically or critically? In most respects, it does not. Many elements of the text could fit comfortably in the mind-set or the bookshelf of either playwright. This should not surprise us. After all, in Jacobean England Catholics and Protestants agreed on many things, and their vocabulary often overlapped. Even if Middleton or Shakespeare became “atheists” at some point in their lives, as Marlowe allegedly did, they would have been raised as Elizabethan Christians. As dramatists, they shared an interest in the secret substitution of one woman for another in a man’s bed (“the bed trick”) and long, complicated final scenes. Both satirized Puritan hypocrisy.¹⁹ Both were interested in intelligent, eloquent, religious women. Indeed, most of the specifically religious elements of the play could be interpreted in ways that would satisfy spectators of more than one religious or sectarian perspective, as Kathryn R. McPherson’s essay about catechism in this volume suggests. “Grace is grace,” Lucio says, “despite of all controversy” (1.2.24–25). For most of the play, we can treat “Shakespeare-and-Middleton” as though it were a single authorial entity.

But in other respects “Shakespeare and/or Middleton” would be a better way to refer to a materially and intellectually plural collaboration between individuals who do not *always* agree, and cannot be homogenized, theatrically or theologically, any more than the play itself can be performed by just one actor. David Nicol cogently criticizes the tendency to treat collaborative plays as though they were written by one author, and in particular as though they were written by the more canonical of two collaborators. Nicol focuses on collaborations between Middleton and

Rowley, where Middleton is the canonical partner, and he objects particularly to the way that critics routinely assume that Rowley shared Middleton's Calvinist tendencies.²⁰ But the same bias can be seen in many scholarly studies of religion in Shakespeare's plays, which generally ignore the fact that anywhere from a quarter to a third of them contain the work of collaborators or revisers.²¹ Specifically, when Middleton collaborates with, or adapts, Shakespeare, this critical procedure tends to render Middleton as invisible as Rowley, and more generally to assume that any religious language in the play represents Shakespeare's perspective.

The 1623 text of *Measure for Measure* brings together the work of two playwrights with markedly different religious profiles. In 1611, the Protestant historian John Speed, referring to "the papist and his poet," linked Shakespeare to the Jesuit Robert Parsons, and later in the seventeenth century Richard Davies, archdeacon of Lichfield, reported that Shakespeare "died a papist." By contrast, William Heminges in the early 1630s claimed that Puritans "seemd much to Adore" Middleton for his play *A Game at Chess*, and specifically contrasted Middleton with the Puritan-baiting former Catholic, Ben Jonson.²² Such evidence does not prove that Shakespeare was a Catholic, or that Middleton was a Puritan. But it does indicate that at least some of Shakespeare's contemporaries thought that he was Catholic, or thought that at least one of his plays supported Catholic positions or expressed Catholic sympathies. No one at the time suggested that Shakespeare was a Puritan, or even a Protestant. Likewise, the testimony of Heminges indicates that at least some of Middleton's contemporaries thought that at least one of his plays supported Puritan positions or expressed Puritan sympathies. No one at the time suggested that Middleton was a papist. Without pretending that we can eavesdrop on the private religious meditations of either Shakespeare or Middleton, we can nevertheless say that they were

perceived by some people in their own time to occupy different ends of the Catholic-Puritan spectrum, and that neither was accused of Marlovian atheism.

Recent archival and critical scholarship supports these early reactions to Shakespeare and Middleton (and Marlowe). Margot Heinemann's contention that Middleton was actually a Puritan has been convincingly challenged by N.W. Bawcutt and Paul Yachnin.²³ But Heinemann, Bawcutt and Yachnin all agree on Middleton's Calvinist Protestantism, as do such diverse critics as John Strachniewski, Swapan Chakravorty, Huston Diehl, Susan Dwyer Amussen, Lori Anne Ferrell, Donna Hamilton, and Ian W. Archer—and everyone who has ever written about *A Game at Chess*, beginning with the Spanish Ambassador in August 1624.²⁴ There is no universal agreement about anything to do with Shakespeare, of course, but the old assumption that Shakespeare was an uncomplicatedly orthodox "Anglican" has been more and more contested since the 1980s, and a considerable body of scholarship now argues that he sympathized with Catholicism, or was haunted by vestigial aspects of the Old Religion.²⁵ These scholars do not always agree among themselves—about whether Shakespeare was a recusant, or a church-papist, or a hardcore Catholic conspirator, or simply what T. S. Eliot called "anglo-catholic in religion."²⁶ Other scholars reject this entire line of argument. But even if we remain agnostic about Shakespeare's sectarian allegiances, we can acknowledge that elements of Shakespeare's work point in religious directions very different from Middleton's. At the very least, we cannot simply assume that Middleton's religious perspective will be identical to Shakespeare's, and we cannot simply assume that *Measure for Measure* offers readers or audiences a single, unified position on the disputed religious issues of post-Reformation England. Instead, perhaps more interestingly, it might represent a dialogue between two distinctly different religious thinkers, each idiosyncratic in certain respects, but each broadly aligned with one of the contending

sectarian positions in the period. Perhaps “Middleton’s revisions of *Measure for Measure*,” as Mark Hutchings and A. A. Bromham suggest, “offered—through rewriting—a radically different perspective on James from the one” Shakespeare provided.²⁷

No serious attribution scholar denies that Shakespeare wrote most of the play.²⁸ So it is misleading for Douglas Bruster to proclaim “that Shakespeare’s most Middletonian title, *Measure for Measure* (from the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew), is affixed to a text we now know was adapted *by* Middleton.”²⁹ Why is this a “Middletonian title”? It occurs in the financial document that records performance of the play at court on 26 December 1604; it undeniably represents Shakespeare’s own original title, not Middleton’s much later adaptation. The title therefore contradicts the tidy binary opposition that Bruster constructs, setting an imaginative, colorful, secular Shakespeare against a moralistic, black-and-white, religious Middleton. The religious title, and the Duke’s speech quoting that title (5.1.407–8), were both indisputably written by Shakespeare. After all, “Shakespeare drew from the Bible constantly and alluded to it in all of his plays in an impressive variety of contexts.”³⁰ In fact, as originally performed, *Measure for Measure* contained *more* explicitly religious language than the text published in 1623. Like medieval religious drama, Shakespeare’s plays routinely put the name of “God” in actors’ mouths—until the 1606 “Acte to Restraine Abuses of Players” forbade the use of such language on stage.³¹ *Measure for Measure*, like other plays that remained in the repertoire, was retrospectively stripped of sacred nouns. Shakespeare’s “coin God’s image” (referring to the making of man in God’s image) became the euphemistic, nonsensical “coin heaven’s image” (2.4.45).

In addition to the play’s title and much of its religious language, Shakespeare must be responsible for a series of interconnected departures from the play’s sixteenth-century sources:

the transformation of the Isabella character into a novice, her conversation with a nun of the order of the Poor Clares, the disguise of the Duke as a friar and his conversations with two other friars, the specific references to the Duke being “confessor” to Angelo (3.1.167), his giving “shrift” to Barnardine (4.2.205), his having “confessed” Mariana (5.1.526), Lucio’s speculation that the Duke is “in Rome” (3.1.353), and the Duke-Friar’s own claim to be “late come from the See / On special business from his Holiness” (3.1.475-6). All these details are unmistakably Catholic. But Shakespeare’s portrayal of monks and nuns in *Measure* differs from the standard Protestant perspective.³² They do not engage in illicit sex; they are not gluttonous; they are not financially greedy. Though accused of slander and seditious conspiracy, his religious figures in the play in fact support the legitimate hereditary sovereign, at some danger to themselves. The Duke in disguise combines secular and religious authority, which Debora Shuger links to traditions of “sacred kingship” and “high Christian royalism.”³³ This combination could be interpreted as an allegory of the King as head of the English church, but Protestant kings were not monks, and they did not undertake “special business from his Holiness.”

Moreover, Shakespeare’s structure sets this friar-Duke against Angelo, a “precise” layman (1.3.50) who calls himself “a saint” (2.2.181); both these idioms were associated with Puritans, and Shuger traces Angelo’s particular obsession with the comprehensive legal regulation of sexuality to mid-sixteenth-century Calvinist sources.³⁴ As Richard Wilson notices, in Shakespeare’s unexpurgated 1604 text Angelo’s “God in my mouth, / As if I did but only chew his name” (2.4.5) negatively linked Angelo “directly with Reformers like Calvin, who measured, or like Zwingli, denied, the real presence in the consecrated bread.”³⁵ In Shakespeare’s plot, “Friar Lodowick” (the Duke), Friar Peter, and the postulant Isabella collectively and publicly expose Angelo as “an hypocrite” (5.1.41), the key feature of the stage

Puritan in early modern England. In all these respects, *Measure* fits the religious politics of the rest of the Shakespeare canon. It also fits the circumstances of the court performance of *Measure for Measure* during the Christmas season of 1604, after King James had both made peace with Catholic Spain and rebuked the Puritan wing of the English church at the Hampton Court Conference.

By late 1621 or early 1622, when Middleton adapted *Measure*, the religious climate had significantly changed. The Gunpowder Plot in November 1605 created a more widespread anxiety about Jesuits in particular, and Catholic subversion more generally; the assassination of Henri IV in 1610 only deepened that anti-Catholic paranoia (as Adrian Streete discusses in this collection). By 1621, English soldiers were fighting and dying in Germany, in what would come to be called the Thirty Years' War. The Austrian Archdukes were leaders of the Catholic dynasty that was attempting to roll back the Reformation and drive Protestantism out of Germanic northern Europe. They surrounded themselves with Jesuit advisors, and their armies had already evicted from Bohemia the young and popular Princess Elizabeth (daughter of King James) and her Protestant husband, the Elector Palatine.³⁶ The Parliament of 1621 ignored the King's priorities, and began the session with popular anti-Catholic legislation.³⁷ Royal pardons of convicted court favorites and Catholic sympathizers—most conspicuously in the Overbury scandal—alienated large sections of the population.³⁸ Sermons and ballads implicitly criticized the King's refusal to commit himself to resisting Catholic aggression in Germany and Bohemia, even in defense of his own daughter, and a devastating illicit pamphlet (*Vox Populi*) portrayed the English king and court as bribed dupes of the Spanish ambassador.³⁹ Middleton was the dramatist who most conspicuously captured this new national mood. His reactions to the Overbury scandal began with *The Witch* (1616); *World Tossed at Tennis* (1620) celebrated the

Protestant war in Europe; *Hengist, King of Kent* (1621) contrasted the poverty of ordinary working people with a narcissistic leader who allows the country to be invaded by pagans.⁴⁰ *A Game at Chess* (1624) spectacularly allegorized Catholic and Habsburg conspiracies against Protestant England.

Shakespeare in 1604 apparently set his play in Italy, probably Ferrara; by changing the locale to Vienna, Middleton in 1621 summoned up for his audiences the violent religious binaries of the Thirty Years War.⁴¹ But in a theater without sets, settings were conveyed in part by costumes: the King's Men "put off" the Italian fashions intended by Shakespeare, and put on Germanic ones instead. They also put on military dress. Middleton's most extensive addition to the play, in its second scene, includes the line "there's not a soldier of us all" (1.2.14).⁴² That reference to soldiers follows naturally from Middleton's first added speech, which explicitly refers to events in central Europe in 1621: "If the Duke, with the other dukes, come not to composition with the King of Hungary, why then, all the dukes fall upon the King" (1.2.1–3).⁴³

This first sentence also contains the very first evidence of Middletonian language.⁴⁴ The phrase "come to composition with" appears nowhere else in the Shakespeare canon, but does appear in Middleton's *Wisdom of Solomon Paraphrased*, where (unusually) it has an explicitly religious meaning. Addressing the "sin-flowing face" of the reader, Wisdom asks "sham'st thou not to err, to sin, to stray, / To come to composition with thy vice" (1.79–80). To "come to composition with" is here a shameful act, particularly in the context of God's absolute sovereignty:

For he which rules the orb of heaven and earth,
And the unequal course of every star,
Did know man's thoughts and secrets at his birth,
Whether inclined to peace or discord's jar.
He knows what man will be ere he be man,

And all his deeds in his life's living span. (1.85–90)

Good and evil, peace and discord, are predestined by an all-knowing God. From the perspective of many English Protestants in 1621, a peace treaty between the House of Austria and the King of Hungary would, indeed, have been seen as shameful, whether anticipated in autumn 1621, or when it actually came to pass in early 1622.

The second speech of the scene picks up that sense of shame: “Heaven grant us its peace, but not the King of Hungary’s” (1.2.4–5). Shakespeare’s canon contains no other example of the exact phrase “heaven grant,” which occurs often enough in other writers, including Middleton, who uses it in his 1621 *Honourable Entertainments* (5.28).⁴⁵ Audiences would certainly have recognized the echo of the Litany’s “Grant us thy peace” (or *Dona nobis pacem*), but what is distinctive here is the shift from “thy” (the personal pronoun, addressed to God) to “its” (referring to “Heaven”). Shakespeare did not use the possessive *its* before 1609; Middleton often used it after 1614. But the linguistic detail matters less than the contrast between “the peace of God, which passeth all understanding” (Phillipians 4:7), defined in the commentary note to the 1599 Geneva Bible as “that great quietness of mind, which God only giveth in Christ,” and “the king’s peace,” defined as “local public order maintained under the authority or jurisdiction” of the monarch.⁴⁶ The speech makes a clear, but subversive, distinction between religious peace and secular, political peace, founded upon a contrast between heaven and the king. The “king” in question is, within the fiction of the play and in the news-sheets of late 1621, the King of Hungary. But the King of England (whose motto was “Blessed are the peacemakers”) was also advocating a secular peace that many Protestants found shameful and irreligious.⁴⁷

The scene's third speech, "Amen," endorses that subversive political sentiment with a specifically Christian seal, and the next speeches continue the scene's religious language (1.2.6–11):

LUCIO. Thou conclud'st like the sanctimonious pirate, that went to sea
with the Ten Commandments, but scraped one out of the table.

SECOND GENTLEMAN "Thou shalt not steal"?

LUCIO. Ay, that he razed.

This passage contains one of the earliest recorded instances of the ironic sense of the word "sanctimonious," no longer meaning "holy" but suggesting instead a spectacle of pretended piety.⁴⁸ Compare *Hengist* 4.2.159–61:

Mark but what subtle veil her sin puts on,
Religion brings her to confession first,
Then steps in art to sanctify that lust.

With *sanctify*, as with *sanctimonious*, we return to Middleton's sense of religion as a costume, something put on the way an actor dons a disguise. The hypocrite conspicuously displays his pious credentials (publicly mounting the Ten Commandments, like certain politicians in the United States) but selectively ignores any that are inconvenient (in this case, as often with the politicians, "Thou shalt not steal"). Actually, "thou shalt not steal" is another phrase that appears in Middleton (*Gallants* 3.4.106–10, *Puritan* 1.4.143–55) but not Shakespeare; Middleton but not Shakespeare also provides parallels for this selective disregard for the commandments (*Hubburt* 505–8, *Trick* 1.4.17–18, *Revenger* 1.2.160–2).

The scene continues with religious imagery that recurs in Middleton but not Shakespeare. "I believe thee" (1.2.18), though Middletonian, is not necessarily religious, but in context it

follows “prays for peace” (1.2.16) and precedes “thou never wast where grace was said” (1.2.18–19), and the idea of a “thanksgiving before meat” as a “grace” leads to discussion of prayers “in meter” (another Middletonian image, 1.2.21) and then proceeds to the idea of thanksgiving “in any language” (1.2.22, a Middletonian dig at Latin prayer). This prolonged banter about types of thanksgiving reaches its climax when “in any language” is echoed by “in any religion” (1.2.23), which explicitly recognizes the sectarian conflict that has been implicit in the scene from its first words. Being “of any religion” (the accusation aimed at Lucio here) is, from the perspective of any monotheist, tantamount to being “of no religion” (the accusation aimed at the Captain in Middleton’s *Phoenix* 8.131). And Lucio, who began the conversation and dominates it throughout Middleton’s addition, then, matter-of-factly, responds to this accusation by defending a complete indifference to the choice of creeds: “Ay, why not? Grace is grace despite of all controversy” (1.2.24). In 1621 this would have been about as shocking as the recent statement, by Pope Francis, that good people who are not Catholics, including even atheists, might get into heaven.

Lucio’s “grace is grace” puns on the earlier reference to “grace” as a prayer of thanksgiving, but it also has invokes the deepest theological divisions of post-Reformation Europe, as the phrase “despite of all controversy” suggests. Shakespeare never elsewhere uses the word “controversy” to refer to sectarian polemics, but Middleton does in his 1620 masque *The World Tossed at Tennis*—in a passage (455–58) that also, like this one in *Measure*, refers to a plurality of religions: “Foh, how abominably he smells of controversies, schisms, and factions! Methinks I smell forty religions in him, and ne’er a good one.” As Naseeb Shaheen notes, in relation to this passage in *Measure*, “Whether a man was justified by works or by grace alone was a well known Reformation controversy,” and the tautology “grace is grace” seems to echo a

passage central to Protestant theology: “And if it bee of grace, it is no more of workes; or els were grace no more grace: but if it be of workes, it is no more grace” (Romans 11.6; Geneva Bible).⁴⁹ Middleton’s emphasis on grace, here and throughout his work, contrasts with Shakespeare’s interest in the Catholic idea that one might be “saved by merit,” a phrase that occurs twice in his plays (*Love’s Labours Lost* 4.1.21–2, *1 Henry IV* 1.2.107).

We might take “despite of all controversy” as a rejection of pedantic theological difference in favor of a Unitarian belief in universal salvation, a heresy that actually originated in eastern Europe in the sixteenth century. But Lucio’s invocation of grace immediately takes a surprising turn: “as for example, thou thyself are a wicked villain despite of all grace” (1.2.25–6). The transitional phrase here, “as for example,” occurs six times in Middleton, never in Shakespeare. But the theologically significant phrase comes at the end of the sentence, where “despite of all grace” seems to limit the potential of God’s forgiveness. I can find in the existing databases no early parallels for this shocking phrase, and no parallels in Shakespeare for the collocation “of all grace.”⁵⁰ But the wounded wife in Middleton’s *A Yorkshire Tragedy*, trying to understand her husband’s murder of their children, recognizes that something “has beguiled him of all grace / And stole away humanity from his breast” (Sc. 5.81–2), and in *The Revenger’s Tragedy* Lussorioso urges Vindice to “cozen her of all grace” (1.3.114). Either Middleton, in all these passages, heretically denies God’s omnipotence, or he subscribes to the Calvinist doctrine of double predestination: some souls have been predestined by God to damnation since eternity, and since God cannot contradict himself, therefore even God’s grace can no longer save such people.

The mystery of predestination seems to reappear in a shorter passage added by Middleton during the courtroom scene where Escalus reflects that

Some rise by sin, and some by virtue fall;
 Some run from breaks of ice, and answer none;
 And some condemned for a fault alone (2.1.38–40)

Both salvation and condemnation here seem utterly random, inexplicable, devoid of what Middleton calls, in the earlier discussion of grace, “any proportion” (1.2.22). Noticeably, Middleton does not give this speech to the hypocritical Puritan Angelo, but to the far more sympathetic, level-headed Escalus. He surveys reward and punishment not from the heights of an explicit theological doctrine, Catholic or Protestant, but from the perspective of one uncomprehending layman (like the ant’s eye view of Middleton’s *Father Hubbard’s Tales*). Whether we interpret the words in a secular or religious sense, to this observer “rise” and “fall” obey no law of rational or just causation. Perhaps these lines reflect an entirely secular ideology; perhaps Middleton resembles the atheist Marlowe more than scholars realize. If there is a Christian theology here, it’s an unspoken one. The little guy discerns no correspondence between merit and reward. Isn’t this where Calvinism comes from, emotionally? Doesn’t the logically rigorous theological system originate in the simple observation, the conviction, that merit makes no difference, in this world or the next?

Middleton’s final major addition to the play is a monologue by what the text, in speech prefixes and stage directions, calls the “Clown” (a.k.a. “Pompey Bum”) at the beginning of 4.3. The Clown directly addresses the audience for eighteen lines, describing the population of the prison: “I am as well acquainted here as I was in our house of profession. One would think it was Mistress Overdone’s own house, for here be many of her old customers” (4.3.1–4). He then proceeds with a list of the customers’ names and their crimes: Master Rash, Master Caper, young Dizzy, young Master Deepvow, Master Copperspur and Master Starve-lackey, young Drop-heir, Master Torchlight, Master Shoe-tie, “and I think forty more” who are now reduced to begging

with the prisoners' cry for charity, "for the Lord's sake" (4.3.4–18). The word "here" in the opening sentence recurs another four times, and in performance it clearly equates the prison with the theater, and both with a whorehouse, the actor's "house of profession" (4.3.2), home of "our trade" (4.3.18). But "house of profession" usually, in early modern English, referred to a monastic institution (like the Blackfriars, converted from a monastery into a playhouse where the revised *Measure for Measure* was first performed).⁵¹ The Clown's soliloquy thus unites the brothel, the prison, the theater, and the abbey: places of pleasure and punishment, of aesthetic and ascetic life. In the Blackfriars playhouse, the gentlemen that Pompey describes could have been sitting on the stage, literally cohabiting in his "house of profession"; in performance he can pretend to recognize them, and point them out to other members of the audience (see Illustration 1). Pompey concludes that we are all sinners, begging for forgiveness and a sympathetic handout. Middleton's Clown reminds us that we are no better than the hookers, crooks, and suckers, and could easily wind up as their cellmates.⁵² Jowett conjectures that Pompey should be carrying a book, a registry of prison inmates, which might also be imagined as Middleton's "Black Book," a census of hell. But the book might also be imagined as a bible or a prayerbook, and Pompey as the preacher, giving a sermon or a lecture. We are all sinners; our only hope of escape from well-earned punishment is the prayer "for the Lord's sake!"

The King's Men actor who performed this Clown monologue in 1621 might have the same King's Men actor who played the Clown in *Macbeth*, performing the Porter's comic monologue (2.3.1–18). Although Middleton apparently adapted *Macbeth*, modern attribution scholarship credits Shakespeare with the Porter's speech, and assumes that it was written for performance at the Globe, the King's Men's only venue in 1606; the original Globe was an outdoor playhouse that (unlike the modern reconstructed Globe) was until 1609 used year-round,



Aaron Moon as Pompey addressing the audience in Measure for Measure, 4.3. Courtesy of Hoosier Bard Productions.

and during some parts of the year it might naturally be described as “too cold for hell” (2.3.16). The Porter imagines that those knocking at Macbeth’s castle gate are damned souls knocking at the entrance to hell. The knocks come from behind the tiring house, offstage; we can hear those damned souls, but we cannot see them, and they are clearly *not* us. Shakespeare’s “devil-porter” of hell-gate, like his other Vice figures, alludes to earlier religious drama, and the speech describes a few specific individuals (a farmer, an equivocator, a tailor) who are damned and already dead. Middleton’s clown, by contrast, gives us a long jumble of names of living individuals, and gestures to an indeterminate number of others; they are all “here,” like us, and alive, like us, in an indoor “house” frequented by gentlemen and gallants. Shakespeare’s damned are an invisible “them,” an unhappy few; Middleton’s damned are a visible, populous “us.” The two playwrights—and this is, I think, typical of all their work—give us different estimates of the

relative populations of heaven and hell, and different predictions about our own most likely destination. In itself, that difference need not separate Catholics from Protestants. But it certainly does distinguish one religious imagination from another.

These three passages in *Measure for Measure* describe a world recognizable to any reader or actor familiar with Middleton's work.⁵³ But that world may be unfamiliar and unappealing to optimistic Americans who worship progress and believe that Jesus loves them. Unlike Garrison Keillor's iconic Lake Wobegon, Middleton's Vienna is a place where, we might say, "all the children are *below* average." Middleton has often been called a "cynic," and he does satisfy Ambrose Bierce's definition of that word ("a blackguard who sees things as they are, not as they ought to be").⁵⁴ The vision of universal sin and sporadic, irrational salvation, evident here and elsewhere in his work, might seem to confirm Ewan Fernie's description of a Dostoevskian, "demonic Middleton," who imagines "a total split between humanity and God" and believes in "something like Christianity without Christ," an artist filled with "a self-hatred so deep as to encompass the entire species," dramatizing a world where "the degrees of moral difference between human beings vanish into degraded equivalency."⁵⁵

But Fernie's eloquent diagnosis of the teenage poet who wrote *The Wisdom of Solomon Paraphrased* ignores a fundamental fact about teenagers: many of them grow up, and the adults they become are embarrassed and insulted if you equate them with that awkward earlier caterpillar. Middleton was 41 when he adapted *Measure*. (Shakespeare was 40 when the original was performed at court in 1604.) Moreover, in extrapolating from Middleton's biblical paraphrase to the rest of his work, Fernie and Bruster ignore a fundamental fact about characters like Lucio and Pompey: they do not inhabit a Viennese novel, meant to be read in middle-class solitude. Lucio and Pompey are clowns, performed by actors wearing make-up and costumes,

and maybe even wigs, actors whose conversions are routinely faked and temporary (Illustration 2). “The key feature uniting all clowns” is that they “break the rules.”⁵⁶ Their clowning embodies freedom, including the freedom to fail and to mock: “God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise” (1 Corinthians 1:27, Geneva Bible). Lucio and Pompey are clown roles that actors enjoy playing, and that audiences enjoy watching. They are funny, and they make us laugh, and laughing is good for us. Audiences also like Escalus: his kindness, his intelligence, his intellectual honesty, even his acceptance—in another short passage apparently added by Middleton—that “there’s no remedy. . . there is no remedy” (2.1.267, 272). Who are we to assume that we can fix everything? Angelo thinks he can fix people’s sexuality; the Duke thinks he can fix Angelo; but both could learn a lot from Middleton’s additions.



Thomas Cardwell as Lucio in Measure for Measure, 1.2. Courtesy of Hoosier Bard Productions.

Who are we to assume that we are among the Elect, or that we merit salvation? The “degraded equivalency” of clown theology reminds us that we all fall on banana peels, and that the worst of

the seven deadly sins is Pride. Lucio, Escalus and Pompey all, in their own idiom, perhaps more effectively and certainly more appealingly than Isabella, throw rotten cabbages at “man, proud man, / Dressed in a little brief authority” (2.2.120–21).

Middleton makes Calvinism fun, or Middleton makes fun of Calvinism. In the theater, how can we tell the difference, and does the difference matter? Either way, we are having fun. Either way, his plays play seriously with the religion of Protestants. In his additions to *Measure for Measure*, he is also playing with Shakespeare: playing with another man’s characters, using his own verbal instrument to play variations on another man’s theme, and not too proud to play the subsidiary role of adapter, tinkerer, the sinner who revises and edits. Whether or not the world makes sense, we are, in Middleton’s theater, in it together, playing. Seriously.

¹ All quotations from Middleton (including *Measure for Measure*) are cited from *The Collected Works of Thomas Middleton*, gen. ed. Gary Taylor and John Lavagnino (Oxford: Clarendon, 2007).

² Bruster, “Middleton’s Imagination,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Thomas Middleton*, ed. Gary Taylor and Trish Thomas Henley (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 518–34; Murray, *The Poetics of Conversion in Early Modern English Literature: Verse and Change from Donne to Dryden* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 29 (discussing *A Game at Chess*).

³ Tom Rubython, *And God Created Burton* (London: Myrtle, 2011), 437–505.

⁴ Jeffrey L. Carrier, *Jennifer Jones: a Bio-bibliography* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1990), xii–xiv.

⁵ Bierce, *Unabridged Devil’s Dictionary*, ed. David E. Schultz and S. T. Joshi (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2000), 207.

⁶ My own work on this essay has been revised and improved as a result of many helpful suggestions from the editors (James Mardock and Kathryn R. McPherson). For additional feedback I am particularly grateful to Gabriel Egan, Andrew Gurr, Trish Thomas Henley, and Gary Taylor. More generally, I am indebted to members of the NEH seminar on “The Reformation of the Book” (Oxford, 2007).

⁷ For everyday religious experience as performative, see for instance Richard Schechner’s canonical *Performance Studies: An Introduction*, 3rd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2013), esp. 276–7, and—for one case study, out of hundreds—John Burdick, “The Singing Voice and Racial Politics on the Brazilian Evangelical Music Scene,” *Latin American Music Review* 30 (2009), 25–55. Lay performances of the Sternhold and Hopkins psalter were, of course, fundamental to what postmodern performance theorists would call the Reformation’s “repertoire of embodied memory”: see Nicholas Temperley, “The Old Way of Singing: Its Origins and Development,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 34 (1981), 511–44.

⁸ Szakolczai, *Comedy and the Public Sphere: The Rebirth of Theatre as Comedy and the Genealogy of the Modern Public Arena* (New York: Routledge, 2013), 2; Martin Green (with John Swan), *The Triumph of Pierrot: The Commedia dell’Arte and the Modern Imagination* (Basingstroke: Macmillan, 1986), xiii–xiv;

Taylor, "Feeling Bodies," in *Shakespeare in the Twentieth Century: Proceedings of the Sixth World Shakespeare Congress*, ed. Jonathan Bate et al. (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1998), 258–79.

⁹ On preachers and players competing for the same audiences, see Martha Tuck Rozett, *The Doctrine of Election and the Emergence of Elizabethan Tragedy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 15–25.

¹⁰ Szokolczai, 200.

¹¹ Herbert Jack Heller, *Penitent Brothellers: Grace, Sexuality, and Genre in Thomas Middleton's City Comedies* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2000), esp. 47–68.

¹² Dollimore, *Radical Tragedy: Religion, Ideology, and Power in the Drama of Shakespeare and his Contemporaries* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984), 149.

¹³ Saccio, "Introduction," *A Mad World, My Masters*, in *Collected Works*, 415–16.

¹⁴ See for instance Stephen L. Macknik, Susana Martinez-Conde and Sandra Blakeslee, *Sleights of Mind: What the Neuroscience of Magic Reveals about our Everyday Deceptions* (New York: Picador, 2011).

¹⁵ On Marlowe and atheism see, most recently, Chloe Kathleen Preedy, *Marlowe's Literary Scepticism: Politic Religion and Post-Reformation Polemic* (London: Bloomsbury, 2012). Preedy emphasizes the destabilizing effect of religious polemic, but never addresses the specifically theatrical phenomenon of counterfeit faith.

¹⁶ Wilson, ed., *Measure for Measure* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1922), 97–113; Walker, "The Text of *Measure for Measure*," *Review of English Studies* 34 (1983), 1–20.

¹⁷ Jowett and Taylor, "'With New Additions': Theatrical Interpolation in *Measure for Measure*," in Taylor and Jowett, *Shakespeare Reshaped 1606–1623* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 107–236, 248–321; Jowett, "The Audacity of *Measure for Measure* in 1621," *Ben Jonson Journal* 8 (2001), 229–47; *Measure for Measure*, ed. Jowett, in *Collected Works*, 1542–85, and *Thomas Middleton and Early Modern Textual Culture: A Companion to The Collected Works*, ed. Taylor and Lavagnino (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007), 417–21, 681–89.

¹⁸ Terri Bourus and Gary Taylor, "Measure for Measure(s): Performance-Testing the Adaptation Hypothesis," *Shakespeare*, 10.2 (June 2014), forthcoming. This essay documents an experimental production of both versions, which I directed; it also surveys scholarly responses to the adaptation hypothesis between 1994 and 2012, and provides new evidence for Middleton's adaptation.

¹⁹ Middleton used the word "Puritan" satirically in *A Mad World, My Masters*, *The Puritan*, *The Revenger's Tragedy*, *A Yorkshire Tragedy*, *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside*, *More Dissemblers Besides Women*, *The Witch*, and *Hengist King of Kent*. For the first thirty-five years of his life, mainstream English Protestantism was strongly Calvinist, and Middleton could confidently differentiate himself from Puritans; but in the early 1620s the growing Arminian sympathies of the royal family and the church hierarchy, combined with the Stuart insistence on dynastic alliances with Catholics, increasingly aligned Middleton's Calvinist anti-Catholicism with oppositional Puritans.

²⁰ Nicol, *Middleton and Rowley: Forms of Collaboration in the Jacobean Playhouse* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012), 3–65.

²¹ For a useful summary, see Hugh Craig, "Authorship," in *The Oxford Handbook of Shakespeare*, ed. Arthur F. Kinney (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 23–30.

²² For Speed, Parsons, and Shakespeare's *Henry IV, Part One*, see Gary Taylor, "The Fortunes of Oldcastle," *Shakespeare Survey* 38 (1985), 85–100; for the contrast between Shakespeare and Middleton, see Taylor, "Forms of Opposition: Shakespeare and Middleton," *English Literary Renaissance*, 24 (1994), 283–314, and "Divine []sences," *Shakespeare Survey* 54 (Cambridge University Press, 2001), 13–30.

²³ Heinemann, *Puritanism and Theatre: Thomas Middleton and Opposition Drama under the Early Stuarts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980); Bawcutt, "Was Thomas Middleton a Puritan Dramatist?," *Modern Language Review* 94 (1999), 925–39; Yachnin, "Reversal of Fortune: Shakespeare,

Middleton, and the Puritans," *ELH* 70 (2003), 787-811. For further critiques of Heinemann see the survey of biographical sources in *Companion*, 449-58, esp. 451.

²⁴ Stachniewski, "Calvinist Psychology in Middleton's Tragicomedies," in *Three Jacobean Revenge Tragedies: A Casebook*, ed. R. V. Holdsworth (Basingtoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1990), 226-46; Chakravorty, *Society and Politics in the Plays of Thomas Middleton* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996); Diehl, *Staging Reform, Reforming the Stage: Protestantism and Popular Theater in Early Modern England* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1997); Amussen, "Introduction," *The Peacemaker*, in *Collected Works*, 1305; Ferrell, "Introduction," *The Two Gates of Salvation*, in *Collected Works*, 679-82; Hamilton, "Introduction," *The Puritan Widow*, in *Collected Works*, 509-13; Archer, "Religious Identities," in *Middleton in Context*, ed. Suzanne Gossett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 135-43.

²⁵ E. A. J. Honigmann, *Shakespeare: The Lost Years* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985, rev. ed. 1998); Park Honan, *Shakespeare: A Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999); Stephen Greenblatt, *Hamlet in Purgatory* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001); Richard Wilson, *Secret Shakespeare* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004); Peter Ackroyd, *Shakespeare: The Biography* (New York: Vintage, 2005); Regina Buccola, *Fairies, Fractious Women, and the Old Faith: Fairy Lore in Early Modern British Drama and Culture* (Selinsgrove: Susquehanna University Press, 2006); David Beauregard, *Catholic Theology in Shakespeare's Plays* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2007). For a survey that acknowledges "significant Catholic sympathies and connections," see David Bevington, *Shakespeare and Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 74-98.

²⁶ Eliot, *For Lancelot Andrewes: essays on style and order* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1929), vii.

²⁷ Hutchings and Bromham, *Middleton and his Collaborators* (Northcote: British Council, 2008), 71. Although published after the *Collected Works*, this book was in press before the edition was published, and therefore takes no account of its new evidence and conclusions.

²⁸ In "As Mice By Lions: Political theology and *Measure for Measure*," *Shakespeare* 10.4 (forthcoming in December 2014), Richard Wilson conjectures that Middleton radically restructured "half" the play. I am grateful to Professor Wilson for giving me advance access to his essay, but I have limited myself to the more conservative evidence of the Oxford Middleton.

²⁹ Bruster, "Imagination," 518-19.

³⁰ Hannibal Hamlin, *The Bible in Shakespeare* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 5.

³¹ For a brief history of the decline of religious drama in England, culminating in the 1606 Act, see John R. Elliott, Jr., *Playing God: Medieval Mysteries on the Modern Stage* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989), 3-9.

³² David Beauregard, "Shakespeare on Monastic Life: Nuns and Friars in *Measure for Measure*," *Religion and the Arts*, 5 (2001), 248-72; Beauregard, *Catholic Theology*, 57-75 (with further evidence of the Catholic significance of the play's four references to penance and auricular confession, 165-67).

³³ Shuger, *Political Theologies in Shakespeare's England: The Sacred and the State in "Measure for Measure"* (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 56. Although Richard Wilson challenges Shuger on several points, he argues that the Duke's reference to "the sword of heaven" (3.1.514) alludes to "Curtana, the broken sword of Edward the Confessor carried at English coronations to symbolise mercy," "which would have had particular pertinence just after the coronation of King James at Westminster Abbey ("As Mice by Lions"). As English king and Catholic saint, Edward the Confessor embodied, if anyone did, "sacred kingship."

³⁴ Shuger most impressively situates the sexual politics of the play in sixteenth-century intellectual sources (9-36), but she is hardly the first to see correspondences between Angelo and Puritanism. For the editorial tradition see Mark Eccles, ed., *Measure for Measure: A New Variorum Edition* (New York: Modern Language Association, 1980), 62, 97; for an early sustained exposition, see Robert G. Hunter, *Shakespeare and the Comedy of Forgiveness* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1965), 213-22.

³⁵ Wilson, "As Mice by Lions" (forthcoming).

³⁶ For more detail on relevant changes in the political climate more generally, see Jowett and Taylor, 178–85, Jowett ‘Audacity’; Taylor, ‘Mediterranean’; Bourus and Taylor, “Performing-Testing”. Here I focus specifically on religious issues.

³⁷ Robert Zaller, *The Parliament of 1621: a study in constitutional conflict* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971), 88–111, 142–55.

³⁸ For the Overbury scandal, see Alistair Bellany, *The Politics of Court Scandal in Early Modern England: News Culture and the Overbury Affair, 1603–1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); for Middleton’s dramatic reactions to the scandals, see A. A. Bromham and Zara Bruzzi, “*The Changeling*” and the Years of Crisis 1619–24: A Hieroglyph of Britain (London: Continuum, 1990).

³⁹ Thomas Cogswell, *The Blessed Revolution: English politics and the coming of war, 1621–1624* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 14–31.

⁴⁰ Marion O’Connor, “Introduction,” *The Witch*, in *Collected Works*, 1124–28; C. E. McGee, “Introduction,” *The World Tossed at Tennis*, in *Collected Works*, 1405–8; Gary Taylor, “History · Plays · Genre · Games,” *Handbook*, 47–63.

⁴¹ Gary Taylor, “Shakespeare’s Mediterranean Measure for Measure,” in *Shakespeare and the Mediterranean: The Selected Proceedings of the International Shakespeare Association World Congress, Valencia, 2001*, ed. Tom Clayton, Susan Brock, and Vicente Forés (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2004), 243–69.

⁴² See Bourus and Taylor, “Performance-Testing,” for a more detailed analysis of differences in costuming.

⁴³ For a full account of suspected alterations by Middleton, see Jowett’s edition of *Measure* in *Collected Works*. I focus here only on changes that seem to me to have a religious significance.

⁴⁴ I base my account of linguistic features on Jowett’s commentary in *Collected Works*, which focuses on differences between Shakespeare’s vocabulary and Middleton’s. Jowett, however, does not specifically discuss the religious significance of the verbal parallels.

⁴⁵ Jowett does not record this parallel to *Honourable Entertainments*, or the lack of Shakespeare parallels here, perhaps because he recognizes that “Heaven” might have resulted from expurgation of an original “God.” But when such expurgation occurs elsewhere, it does not also alter “his” to “its.” All we can say with certainty is that the first four words of the speech are paralleled in Middleton, and not paralleled in Shakespeare.

⁴⁶ *Oxford English Dictionary*, *peace* 1.b. (archaic).

⁴⁷ See W. B. Patterson, *King James I and VI and the Reunion of Christendom* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000) for a sympathetic account of the king’s political commitment to peace and reconciliation. In 1621, many English Protestants were not so sympathetic: Cogswell’s account is echoed by many other historians.

⁴⁸ Compare Roger Sharpe, *More Fools Yet* (1610): “Note that Adulterer which seemes sorry now, / And with a fained sanctimonious vow / Abiures his sinne” (A3r).

⁴⁹ Shaheen, *Biblical References in Shakespeare’s Comedies* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1993), 189–90.

⁵⁰ Jowett does not notice these Middleton parallels, or the absence of Shakespeare parallels. This phrase has not attracted editorial or critical attention, perhaps because it fits the dominant modern notion of human freedom, found often enough in English texts after the Restoration, when Arminianism had become the officially sanctioned position.

⁵¹ For first performance of the adaptation at Blackfriars, see Bourus and Taylor, “Performance-Testing.” *OED* documents a series of relevant definitions of *profession*: “The declaration, promise, or vow made by a person entering a religious order; (hence) the action of entering such an order; the fact or occasion of being professed in a religious order” (1.a); “the faith or religion which a person professes” (4.a); “The action or an act of declaring, affirming, or avowing an opinion, belief, custom, etc., or of laying open claim to a particular quality or feeling. In later use sometimes with suggestion of insincerity or falsity, or with implied contrast to practice or fact” (5); “An occupation in which a professed knowledge of some

subject, field, or science is applied; a vocation or career, especially one that involves prolonged training and a formal qualification. . . law, the Church, and medicine” (7.a); “any occupation . . . a trade or handicraft” (7.b). The other seven examples of “house of profession” I found in EEBO_TCP (checked August 26, 2013) are all religious, and two refer specifically to Jesuits. Compare the Reformation usage of *nunnery* to mean “brothel” (*OED* 1.b.), with unambiguous examples from 1593 to 1625.

⁵² My sense of the theatrical potential of Pompey’s monologue is indebted to the performance by Aaron Moon in the Hoosier Bard production (Indianapolis, 21 February–2 March 2, 2013).

⁵³ On acting Middleton, see Terri Bourus, “‘It’s a Whole Different Sex!’: Women Performing Middleton on the Modern Stage,” in *Handbook*, 551–70.

⁵⁴ Bierce, *Devil’s Dictionary*, 47.

⁵⁵ Fernie, “Wisdom in Reverse,” in *Handbook*, 418–36.

⁵⁶ Donald McManus, *No Kidding!: Clown as Protagonist in Twentieth-Century Theatre* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2003), 12.